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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Saddam, the nightingale of Baghdad - Sabah
Rumsfeld: Saddam a prisoner of war - Hurriyet
Saddam's capture shocks Arabs - Hurriyet
Saddam ate American chocolate, drank 7-Up - Milliyet
Saddam might be hanged on July 1 - Milliyet
Saddam to be charged with over 10,000 crimes - Sabah
Ex-wife Shahbender informed on Saddam-Turkiye
Denktas: Turkish Cypriots want to join EU - Sabah
Ankara wants a coalition in TRNC - Milliyet
Denktas prefers national unity government - Hurriyet
EU: Voters have rejected the status quo in TRNC - Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS

Bush: Saddam will be given a fair trial - Radikal
IGC wants capital punishment for Saddam - Cumhuriyet
Saddam taken to Qatar - Yeni Safak
Saddam's trial a mystery - Zaman
Greeks, Greek Cypriots happy with TRNC election outcome -
Radikal
Denktas holds the key for new government - TRNC press -
Radikal
US State Department: Hope prevailed over fear [in TRNC] -
Cumhuriyet
Denktas launches peace initiative - Cumhuriyet
Ankara will have the last word on TRNC - Zaman
EU: Turks want a solution with Annan Plan - Zaman

BRIEFING

Cyprus: Neither the outgoing government nor the opposition are happy with the outcome of the general elections held in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) on Sunday. Turkish Cypriots have passed the ball to Ankara for the final decision, according to Turkish dailies. TRNC leader Denktas said he would meet with all party leaders before assigning one of them the task of forming the new government. The best solution would be the formation of a government of national unity, Denktas said. However, only Serdar Denktas' Democrat Party (DP) supports this formula. The DP leader said his party might also agree to form a coalition with the opposition parties CTP and BDH. In case of a deadlock, Rauf Denktas may decide to go to early elections within two months. Ankara opposes early polls, however, and is expected to encourage the parties to seek compromise. The opposition did not gain sufficient power to sack Denktas as chief negotiator in the Cyprus talks. Meanwhile, Denktas called on Monday for four-party talks between the TRNC, the Greek Cypriots, Turkey and Greece, and suggested a confederation formula in order to reach a solution. Greek Cypriot leader Papadopoulos said elections under 'ongoing occupation' by Turkish troops would be illegitimate, and called on the Turkish Cypriots to end the occupation and unite Cyprus. "Milliyet" says from Washington that the US wants Ankara to take a step forward for a solution within the framework of the Annan Plan.

Saddam captured: Turkey shares the satisfaction of the Iraqi people and the international community with the capture of Saddam Hussein, according to a statement released by the MFA statement on Monday. "We hope that this

important development will contribute to efforts for ensuring stability and security in Iraq. Now all the Iraqi people should turn to the future,' the statement concluded. Dailies expect the trial of Saddam Hussein to begin in a couple of months. A member of the IGC reportedly said that Iraq would immediately execute Saddam after sovereignty is turned back to Iraqis at the end of June 2004. Police seek Al-Qaida members in Turkey: Turkish police have started tracking 450 Turkish citizens who trained at al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, "Milliyet" reports. Officials believe the suspects may have knowledge about the militants who carried out the four suicide bomb attacks in Istanbul last month.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Saddam's Capture

"Saddam Wants to Live Through the Final Act"

Fatih Altayli commented in the mass appeal Hurriyet (12/16): "Everybody labels Saddam as a coward because he did not choose to commit suicide. This might seem to be true on the surface. Yet when you look at the situation from the political aspect, Saddam may be acting deliberately. Saddam as a 'live captive' can be a more troublesome and complex issue for the US than Saddam's dead body. The US has announced that Saddam will be tried. We just don't know how and where. First of all, the US does not recognize the International War Criminals Tribunal. Secondly, what kind of charges will he be subjected to if he is tried in Iraq? Let's not forget the fact that the US failed to prove any of the claims that provided the ground for the Iraq war."

"Saddam was Captured; What About the WMD?"

Ozgen Acar argued in the social democrat-intellectual Cumhuriyet (12/16): "US forces must have been surprised when they got Saddam, because they haven't found any traces of biological and chemical weapons. The goal for the Baghdad occupation was to find and eliminate weapons of mass destruction. As we all know, this has not happened. Moreover, President Bush has accused Saddam for his involvement in the September 11 attacks, and Secretary Powell has drawn a direct link between Saddam Hussein and Usama Bin Laden when he made the case at the UN. None of these claims have been proven to this day. . It is for sure that Saddam was a dictator. Yet the whole thing makes President Bush the biggest liar ever. . The people of Iraq will try Saddam Hussein, but it remains to be seen how Bush will be treated by the American people in the US elections."

"Saddam was Captured but the Fight is Not Over"

Haluk Ulman observed in the economic-political Dunya (12/16): "It is hard to believe that this man, in his pitiful condition, was able to organize the attacks against the coalition forces. Saddam was incapable of organizing the resistance. He did not even have anybody to protect him. The resistance is probably coming from radical Islamists, who are using Iraq as their new playground. .It would also not be a surprise if those who celebrate the capture of Saddam eventually stand against the British and American forces if they see nothing is changing in Iraq. The capture of Saddam marks a new era in Iraq, but the real fight is just beginning."

EDELMAN